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**Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**
**Sixty-second session**
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**Consideration of reports: reports submitted by States parties in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant**

# List of issues in relation to the sixth periodic report of the Russian Federation

**Addendum**

## Replies of the Russian Federation to the list of issues*, **

[Date received: 4 July 2017]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.
** The annexes to the present report are on file with the Committee secretariat and are available for consultation. They may also be accessed from the web page of the Committee.

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# Replies to the list of issues in relation to the sixth periodic report of the Russian Federation to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

## I. General information

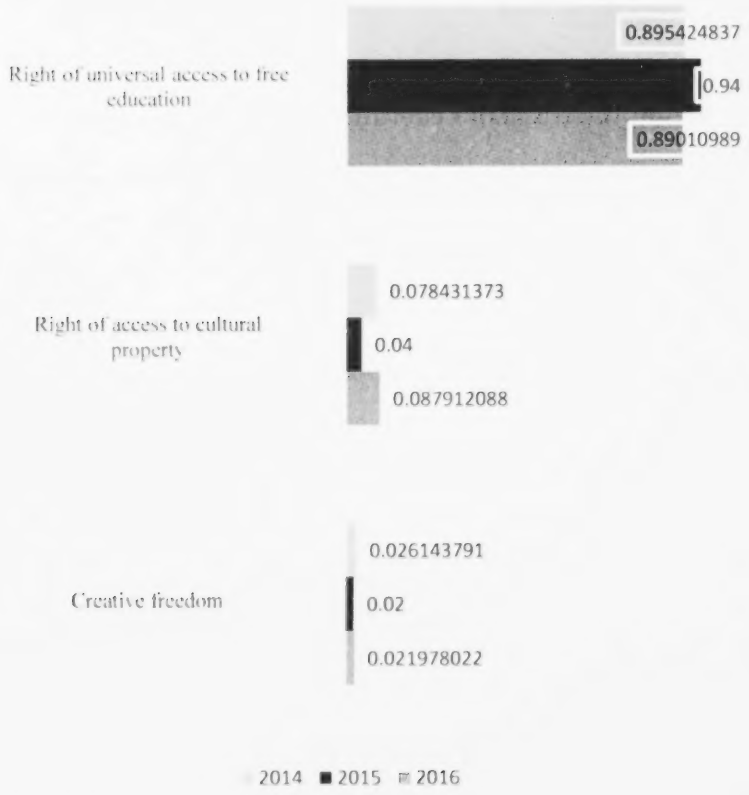
1.

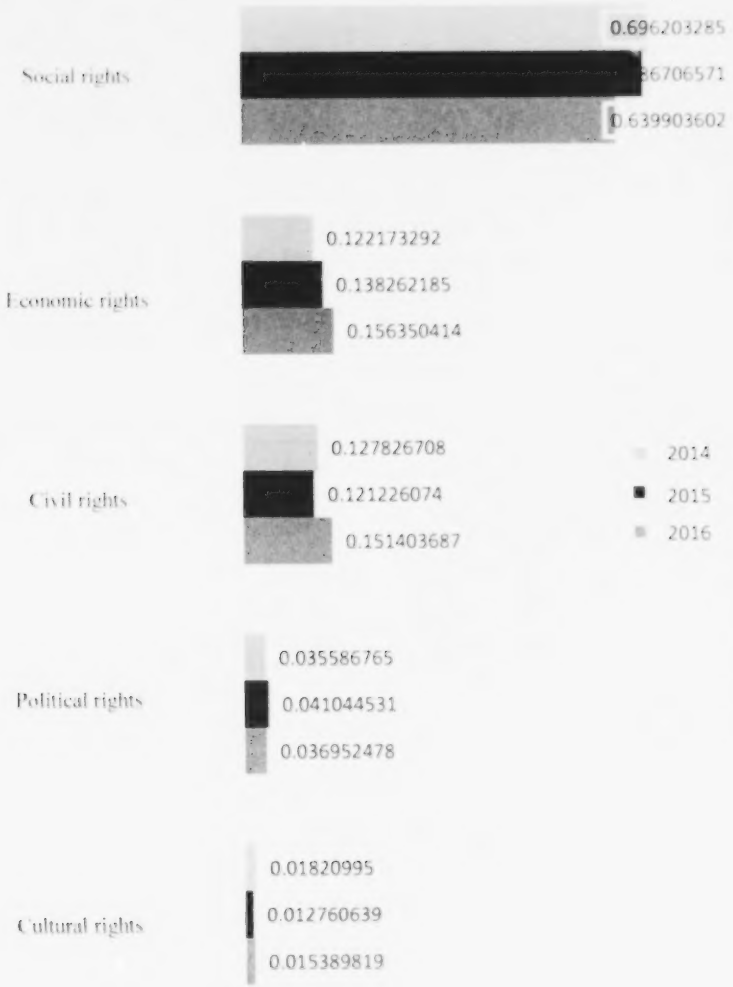
1. Information on court cases (see annex 1).

2.

2. No specific indicators are produced for these issues in the State statistics.

3. However, see below for information on the number, structure and evolution of complaints alleging violations of economic, social and cultural human rights received by the Commissioner for Human Rights in 2014-2016.




Social rights
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Economic rights
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0.138262185
0.156350414
Civil rights
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0.121226074
0.151403687
2014
2015
2016
Political rights
0.035586765
0.041044531
0.036952478
Cultural rights
0.01820995
0.012760639
0.015389819

Private property
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0.23
0.589507842
Land use and ownership
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0.3
0.360735533
Rights of market participants
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0.2
0.019469984
Consumer rights protection
0.017048222
0.23
0.017036236
Freedom of entrepreneurship
0.003896736
0.01
0.008923743
Unity of the economic area
0.009254749
0.03
0.004326663
2014
2015
2016

4. An analysis of the statistics on such complaints received by the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and their outcomes can be found in the Office's 2016 annual report, which is available on the corresponding page of its website: http://ombudsmanrf.org/.

## II. Issues relating to the general provisions of the Covenant (arts. 1-5)

**Right to freely dispose of natural wealth and resources (art. 1 (2))**

3.

5. The Constitution of the Russian Federation (art. 69) guarantees the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples, in accordance with the generally recognized principles and standards of international law and with the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party.

6. Article 1 of the Guarantees of the Rights of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation Act, Act No. 82 of 30 April 1999, defines numerically small indigenous peoples as "peoples who live in territories traditionally settled by their ancestors; maintain traditional lifestyles, economic activities and trades; number fewer than 50,000; and identify themselves as separate ethnic communities."

7. The common register of numerically small indigenous peoples was approved by Government Decision No. 255 of 24 March 2000.

8. In addition, there is also a register of the numerically small indigenous peoples of the north, Siberia and the far east, which was approved by Government Order No. 536 of 17 April 2006.

9. Ensuring ethnic equality in politics and in legal relations specifically requires balancing the representation of large and small ethnic groups in elected bodies; when no groups predominate to the detriment of others' interests, public authority is politically sound. This is the reason for, inter alia, the prohibition of the establishment of political parties on the basis of ethnicity (see the legal position of the Constitutional Court in its Decision No. 18-P of 15 December 2004).

10. In the constitutional system, ethnic equality also manifests itself through specific elements of the individual's constitutional and legal status that in effect guarantee ethnic identity, such as the rights of all persons to determine and to indicate their ethnic affiliation (Constitution, art. 26 (1)), to use their own language and to choose freely the language selected for communication, education, instruction and creative expression (Constitution, art. 26 (2)). At the same time, the establishment in the Russian Federation of a given language's status and the guaranteeing of the rights associated with it must not call into question the use and study of the Russian language as the country's State language. Such a situation would violate the principle of equality of rights and would conflict with article 19 (2) of the Constitution.

11. Ethnic and cultural autonomy is a specific institution for the fostering of ethnic equality; it is defined in legal terms in the Ethnic and Cultural Autonomy Act, Federal Act No. 74 of 17 June 1996.

4.

12. The specificity of the legal status of numerically small indigenous peoples is reflected in the fact that they are granted particular rights and benefits, including under special laws.

13. For example, Russian legislation provides a mechanism to protect the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples with a special procedure governing water use in the areas where they have traditionally lived and exercised their economic activities. The procedure is invoked by the authorities of one of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, in accordance with article 54 (1) of the Water Code (Federal Act No. 74, of 3 June 2006). Article 54 (2) sets forth the right of numerically small indigenous peoples to utilize bodies of water for their traditional use of natural resources. Under article 11 (2) (6) of the Water Code, no water use agreement or decision is required to grant water rights to the numerically small indigenous peoples. Under article 333.2 of the Tax Code (part 2)

(Federal Act No. 117, of 5 August 2000), they are not taxed for the use of water for their own needs.

14. The legislation of the Russian Federation regulates the land use rights of the numerically small indigenous peoples in considerable detail. Article 7 (3) of the Land Code (Federal Act No. 136 of 25 October 2001) stipulates that, in accordance with the Guarantees of the Rights of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation Act, Act No. 82 of 30 April 1999, and with Federal Act No. 49 of 7 May 2001 on Territories of Traditional Resource Use by the Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, a special legal regime may be established for the use of land in areas where the numerically small indigenous peoples and ethnic communities have traditionally lived and exercised their economic activities. These laws set forth the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples, including their right to use land of various categories in the areas in which they have traditionally lived, their right to participate in the formation and activities of councils of representatives of numerically small peoples and their right to participate in the oversight of the use of land of various types and of the enforcement of federal laws and the laws of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation relating to the environment.

15. Pursuant to article 30 (2) of the Forest Code (Federal Act No. 200 of 4 December 2006), persons who belong to one of the numerically small indigenous peoples of the north, Siberia and the far east and who maintain a traditional way of life have the right, in the areas in which they have traditionally lived and exercised their economic activities, to engage in logging free of charge for their own needs, on the basis of established regulations.

16. Article 9 of the Animal World Act, Federal Act No. 52 of 24 April 1995, establishes that, in addition to the general rights of citizens with regard to the protection and use of the animal world and the preservation and restoration of animal habitats, citizens belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples and ethnic communities whose indigenous living environment and traditional way of life have a connection with the animal world are granted special rights, as provided for in articles 48 and 49 of the law.

17. The Fishing and the Preservation of Aquatic Biological Resources Act, Federal Act No. 166 of 20 December 2004, also provides separate regulations for fishing, for the purpose of ensuring the traditional way of life and economic activities of the small indigenous peoples of the north, Siberia and the far east of the Russian Federation (art. 25).

18. In accordance with article 19 of Federal Act No. 209 of 24 July 2009 on Hunting and the Preservation of Hunting Resources and on Amendments to a Number of Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation, persons belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples of the north, Siberia and the far east may engage in hunting for the purpose of maintaining their traditional lifestyles and economic activities. This type of hunting can take place freely (with no requirement for any permits), to the extent necessary to satisfy personal needs.

**5.**

19. In the period 2013-2016, no reports were received of numerically small indigenous peoples having their access to traditional lands, territories and resources restricted by extractive companies (including in Kondopoga district in the Republic of Karelia and in the Kazas settlement in Kemerovo Province). No criminal cases were initiated or investigated.

**Maximum available resources (art. 2 (1))**

**6.**

20. Statistics have been provided on expenditure from the federal budget for State support for the provision of housing and municipal services for citizens, and also in support of education, health care and social policy (see annex 2).

7.

21. As part of the implementation of State policy to promote a healthy lifestyle, which includes reducing alcohol and tobacco consumption, rates of excise duty on all types of tobacco and alcohol products are regularly revised upwards.

22. Since 1 January 2017, electronic nicotine-delivery systems, liquid nicotine and heated tobacco (heat-not-burn tobacco) products have been included on the list of excisable goods.

23. The tax legislation of the Russian Federation offers support to socially active organizations in the form of lower rates of income tax and value-added tax (VAT) if they conduct activities to provide services to vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens.

24. Since 2011, the corporate profit tax has been reduced to 0 per cent for organizations conducting educational or medical activities. In 2016, childcare activities were added to this category.

25. Since 2015, organizations that provide citizens with social services, for example those that work to improve the communicative capacities of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, have been able to apply this reduced tax rate (art. 284.5 of the Tax Code).

26. Moreover, the Russian tax system typically has special tax regimes intended, inter alia, to create more favourable economic and financial conditions for small businesses.

27. Such regimes call for several taxes to be replaced with a single tax, and also for a simplified tax reporting system.

28. In order further to promote the development of small businesses, since 2015, taxpayers who are self-employed entrepreneurs operating in the industrial, social or scientific sectors have, under the simplified and patent taxation systems, had the option of not paying taxes for the first two years after their registration. Since 2016, this exemption has been extended to include businesses providing public amenities.

29. The legislative provisions on tax holidays will remain in force up to 2020 inclusive.

30. From 1992 to 2000 (for nine years), the Russian Federation taxed personal income progressively and, despite numerous changes in the tax rates (which were modified nine times and used various gross income brackets), the system proved ineffective. Employers and workers sought constantly to under-report the real income paid (or received) in order to reduce their tax burden.

31. With the introduction on 1 January 2001 of chapter 23 in part 2 of the Tax Code (entitled "Personal income tax") the progressive tax scale was abandoned.

32. The basic personal income tax rate is 13 per cent. Other rates are set for particular types of income.

33. Since the transition in 2001 to a flat tax rate, there has been a steady increase in personal income tax receipts.

34. For most categories of personal income, tax is withheld and paid to the State by tax withholding agents (organizations, private entrepreneurs, privately practising notaries, lawyers who have established legal offices and subsidiaries of foreign organizations in the Russian Federation) when individuals receive income either from them or by virtue of their relations with them.

35. Personal income tax is one of the main sources of revenue for the regional and local budgets. The revenue is given back to society in the form of expenditure from the budget; that is, it is spent to address social issues (to provide medical care, kindergartens, schools and so forth) and to develop industrial and social infrastructure (opportunities to launch new businesses, create new jobs and develop infrastructure).

36. In addition, the framework for the long-term socioeconomic development of the Russian Federation up to 2020, which was approved by Government Order No. 1662 of 17 November 2008, provides for a gradual reduction in the tax burden on disadvantaged

segments of the population, by increasing social tax deductions and refining personal income tax mechanisms, in order to provide an economic stimulus.

37. With regard to the taxation of property, the country's legislation on taxes and duties grants the legislative or representative bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local governments the power to adjust the tax burden. In particular, they have the right to set specific tax rates for personal and corporate assets and for land and transport taxes.

**Non-discrimination (art. 2 (2))**

**8.**

38. Article 19 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination in any form in the Russian Federation.

39. Article 1 of the Civil Code establishes that civil legislation is based first and foremost on the recognition of the equality of the participants in the relations that it governs.

40. Article 4 of the Criminal Code lays down the principle of equality of citizens, according to which persons who commit offences are equal before the law and bear criminal liability regardless of, inter alia, their sex, race, ethnicity, language, origin, economic situation, official capacity, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs and membership of voluntary associations.

41. Article 1.4 of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Russian Federation specifies that by the same token, physical persons are subject to administrative liability without regard to such factors. Legal entities are subject to administrative liability regardless of factors such as their location, form of incorporation or subsidiary status.

42. The principle of equal rights is subject to special State legal protection in the Russian Federation. Violation of this principle gives rise to criminal liability.

43. Pursuant to article 136 of the Criminal Code, discrimination, or a violation of the equality of human and civil rights and freedoms on grounds of sex, race, ethnicity, language, origin, economic situation, official capacity, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs or membership in voluntary associations, when it results in harm to the rights and legitimate interests of citizens, is punishable by: a fine ranging from 100,000 to 300,000 roubles (from US$ 1,700 to 5,000), or by a fine equal in value to 1 to 2 years of the wages or other income of the convicted person, or by deprivation of the right to hold certain positions or engage in certain activities for up to 5 years, or by up to 480 hours of community service, or by up to 2 years of correctional labour, or by up to 5 years of forced labour, or by deprivation of liberty for a term of the same length.

44. In accordance with the generally recognized principles and standards of international law, the legislation of the Russian Federation is also aimed at granting persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate in public decision-making processes, to exercise their rights and to fulfil their duties as full members of society.

**9.**

45. The Russian Federation maintains a position of principle against politically motivated and selective country-specific resolutions, in particular such as General Assembly resolutions 68/262 and 71/205, which were adopted by vote.

46. The Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol became part of the Russian Federation following a referendum held on 16 March 2014 in full compliance with the standards of international law.

47. All the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, including the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, are subject to the federal Constitution and legislation, both of which guarantee citizens respect for all basic rights and freedoms, including the right to work, social security, health care and education. In addition, the international treaties to which the country is a party, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, are fully in force in the Republic of Crimea and in the city of

Sevastopol. Consequently, residents of these constituent entities of the Russian Federation enjoy all the human rights and freedoms set forth in human rights treaties, without any discrimination as compared with the residents of other regions of Russia. To protect their rights, the residents of the peninsula have recourse to all the legal and judicial protection mechanisms available in the country, which are very effective.

48. The Republic of Crimea and the federal city of Sevastopol are multi-ethnic constituent entities of the Russian Federation. According to the 2014 population census of the Crimean Federal Area, there are representatives of 175 ethnic groups living in its territory.

49. Crimean Tatars (232,300 persons; 10.6 per cent of the population) are the third largest ethnic group in the Crimean Peninsula after Russians (1.49 million; 68 per cent of the population) and Ukrainians (344,500 persons; 15.7 per cent of the population).

50. On 21 April 2014, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, signed Decree No. 268 on Measures to Rehabilitate the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Crimean Tatar and German Peoples and to Provide State Support for their Revival and Development. The aim was to redress historical injustices and remedy the consequences of the unlawful deportation from the territory of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Crimean-Tartar and other peoples and the violations of their rights.

51. Together with the appropriate federal executive authorities, the Government has designed and is implementing a set of measures for 2017-2019 to redress historical injustices and to support the political, social and spiritual revival of the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Crimean Tatar and German communities that were subjected to illegal deportation and to political repression on ethnic and other grounds. The set of measures was approved by the Government on 27 March 2017.

52. Crimean Tatars are active participants in the government bodies of the Russian Federation and of the Republic of Crimea.

53. A significant proportion of Crimean Tatars (up to 70 per cent) have already adapted successfully to life in Russia. A very significant factor in this regard is the perception that the federal executive bodies are addressing their problems.

54. Personal and family finances were considered better in 2016 than they had been in 2015. Almost half of the people surveyed (48 per cent) have said that their financial position is stable, and about a third (30 per cent) have noted improvements.[1]

**10.**

55. One of the fundamental principles of labour law is to ensure equality of opportunity for workers, without any discrimination in terms of access to promotion other than on grounds of productivity, qualification and length of service in the specialization, and also to provide training and continuing vocational education (Labour Code of the Russian Federation, art. 2).

56. Under article 62 (3) of the Constitution, foreign citizens and stateless persons enjoy the same rights as citizens and bear the same obligations as them, unless stipulated otherwise in federal law or in the international treaties to which the country is a party.

57. Federal Act No. 62 of 31 May 2002, the Citizenship Act, sets out a procedure to regulate the legal status of a distinct category of persons located in the Russian Federation, namely persons who were citizens of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and who arrived in the Russian Federation for permanent residence before 1 November 2002, and who have not acquired Russian citizenship in accordance with the established procedure, as well as persons who have been issued with passports as citizens of the country but who have subsequently been found not to hold citizenship.

[1] According to a study conducted by the Federal Agency for Ethnicity, "Public Opinion among Crimean Tatars regarding the Situation in the Republic, State Policy and the Problems of the People", Moscow and Simferopol, December 2016-January 2017.

58. Federal Act No. 462 of 19 December 2016 amending Federal Act No. 62, the Citizenship Act, extended its application up to 1 January 2020.

59. Stateless persons have the possibility of acquiring several legal statuses under Russian legislation and are issued with the relevant documentation: the stateless person's temporary residence permit, or the stateless person's permanent residence card.

60. Federal Act No. 83 of 7 May 2013 amended Federal Act No. 115 of 25 July 2002 on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals with the addition of article 10.1, which provides a special procedure for establishing the identity of foreign nationals who do not possess valid identity documents. Such foreign nationals are issued identity certificates through this procedure.

**11.**

61. The rights of ethnic minorities, including Roma, and of foreign citizens to work and to protection from unemployment are guaranteed under the Labour Code (Federal Act No. 197 of 30 December 2001).

62. Pursuant to article 3 of the Code, which deals with the prohibition against labour discrimination, all persons have equal opportunities to exercise their labour rights. No one may have his or her labour rights and freedoms restricted or be granted any advantages on grounds unrelated to the person's performance at work.

63. Persons, including those of Roma ethnicity, who believe that they have been subjected to labour discrimination are entitled to bring their cases to court for the restoration of their violated rights, reparation of material losses and compensation for moral damages.

64. State guarantees of the constitutional rights of ethnic minorities, including Roma, and of migrant workers to work and to social protection from unemployment are also set forth in Act No. 1032-1 of 19 April 1991, the Employment Act. Article 6 establishes that stateless persons too are covered by employment legislation, unless otherwise stipulated by federal laws or the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party.

**12.**

65. The Constitution prohibits any restriction of citizens' rights on grounds of social, racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious affiliation (art. 19).

66. The commission of an offence on grounds of political, ideological, racial, ethnic or religious hatred or enmity or on grounds of hatred or enmity towards a particular social group is classed as an aggravating circumstance under the criminal law (Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, art. 63 (1) (f)).

67. However, the forms used in the State and departmental statistical reporting systems do not collect statistics on offences committed against the category of persons in question.

68. With regard to statistics on hate crimes against homosexual, bisexual and transgender persons, the forms approved for use in the statistical reporting system do not take into account these groups when targeted by crimes committed on grounds of hatred or enmity.

69. In the period 2013-2016, no reports were received of any unlawful limitation of access by persons belonging to sexual minorities (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons) to employment, health-care services or education, and no criminal cases involving offences of this type were initiated or investigated.

70. During this period, the investigation department for North Ossetia-Alania, a unit of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, received one report of an offence involving violence against a person of a non-traditional sexual orientation.

71. Following a procedural check conducted under articles 144 and 145 of the federal Code of Criminal Procedure of 16 July 2013, criminal case No. 26/786 was initiated on the basis of evidence of offences covered by articles 116 (2) (b) (Battery), 166 (1) (Unlawful taking of a motor or other vehicle without intent to steal) and 167 (2) (Malicious destruction

or damage to property) of the federal Criminal Code, in response to the theft of a motor vehicle belonging to N. and his subjection to bodily harm and property damage. In the course of the investigation, it was established that the commission of the aforementioned offences by T. and V. against N. was connected with the non-traditional sexual orientation of the latter. On 16 January 2014, the criminal case was referred to the prosecutor, and subsequently to the court for consideration on the merits. As a result of the trial, the court found T. and V. guilty of the charges and handed down sentences respectively of 1 year's deprivation of liberty, suspended (with the application of article 73 of the federal Criminal Code), and of 6 months of deprivation of liberty.

**Equal rights of men and women (art. 3)**

**13.**

72. Government Order No. 410 of 8 March 2017 approved the national strategy for action for women for 2017-2022.

73. The strategy sets out the main features of State policy in relation to women and is intended to give effect to the principle of equal rights and freedoms and to create equal opportunities for women's enjoyment of such rights and freedoms, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the generally recognized principles and standards of international law and the international treaties to which the country is a party; it is also intended to strengthen women's economic independence, political engagement and opportunities for self-actualization and to overcome stereotypes regarding the social roles of women and men.

74. The key areas on which the strategy focuses are:

- Creating conditions to support the health of women of all ages
- Improving the economic position of women, enabling growth
- Preventing hardship faced by women in society and violence against women
- Increasing women's participation in public and political life
- Improving State statistics relating to the position of women in society

75. The strategy will be implemented in two phases.

76. During the first phase, in 2017-2018, a plan of measures will be adopted to implement the strategy, including a series of priority measures for the implementation of the main areas of State policy for the improvement of the situation of women.

77. During the second phase, in 2019-2022, measures to improve the situation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres will be taken, in line with the strategy's expected outcomes.

78. A plan of implementation measures for this national strategy in 2017-2018 has been drawn up and is currently being agreed with federal executive bodies.

79. Government Decision No. 1520 of 28 December 2017 established a government coordinating council for the strategy's implementation.

80. The coordinating council is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. It includes members of the Federation Council, the upper house of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation; deputies of the State Duma, the lower house of the Federal Assembly; senior officials of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (heads of the executive branches); and representatives of federal executive bodies and of civil society organizations.

# III. Issues relating to the specific provisions of the Covenant (arts. 6-15)

**Right to work (art. 6)**

**14.**

81. Information has been provided on employment and unemployment in the period 2013-2016 (see annex 3).

**15.**

82. To protect the life and health of women, including their reproductive health, article 253 of the Labour Code imposes restrictions on the employment of women in work involving harmful and/or hazardous conditions and in underground work, with the exception of non-physical work and employment in sanitary and domestic services, and a prohibition against the employment of women in work involving the manual lifting or moving of loads exceeding the limits prescribed for them.

83. The Government elaborated on the provisions of this article with Government Order No. 162 of 25 February 2000, which approved a list of jobs involving heavy work and jobs with harmful or hazardous working conditions, in which the employment of women is prohibited.

84. There is no need to revise article 253 of the Labour Code. In 2014, a special assessment of working conditions was introduced as the principal means of legally establishing labour conditions. Consequently, the assessment's findings have been used to regulate the working conditions of women.

85. In addition, with the participation of employers' and trade union associations and scientific institutions, including those in the field of occupational medicine, the list is currently being updated; this is in accordance with paragraph 32 of the action plan for the implementation in 2016-2020 of the demographic policy framework of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025 (approved by Government Order No. 669 of 14 April 2016) and also with the national strategy for action for women 2017-2022.

86. Once this work has been completed, the titles of the occupations (or the jobs) subject to restrictions on the employment of women, as included on the list, will be brought into line with the country's existing legislation. Certain occupations that are no longer performed in the modern economy will be removed, and it will be made possible for women to perform some occupations on the list, provided that it is established by the special assessment of working conditions that the conditions of work are acceptable and that there are no medical obstacles.

**Right to just and favourable conditions of work (art. 7)**

**16.**

87. Article 37 of the Constitution stipulates that all citizens of the Russian Federation have the right to labour remuneration without any discrimination whatsoever and at a level not below the minimum wage set by federal law.

88. The minimum wage is set simultaneously for the entire country under Federal Act No. 82 of 19 June 2000, the Minimum Wage Act.

89. In addition, in accordance with article 133.1 of the federal Labour Code, minimum wage agreements have been concluded in a number of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. The monthly wage of a person who works in a particular constituent entity and who has entered into employment with an employer bound by a regional minimum wage agreement cannot be below the minimum wage set for that particular constituent entity, provided that the worker in question works the required number of hours over the corresponding period and fully meets work standards (i.e., performs the assigned tasks).

90. Pursuant to government instructions, a bill is now being drafted with a view to raising the minimum wage so that it covers a worker's minimum subsistence level.

**17.**

91. One of the basic principles of the legal regulation of labour relations is the equality of the rights and opportunities of workers (Labour Code, art. 2).

92. Pursuant to article 3 of the Labour Code, all persons have equal opportunities to exercise their labour rights.

93. Employers are required to ensure that workers receive equal pay for work of equal value (Labour Code, art. 22).

94. The wages of all workers depend on their qualifications, the complexity of the work they perform and the quantity and quality of the work done (Labour Code, art. 132).

95. Discrimination of any kind in the conditions for the payment of work is prohibited.

96. The prohibition against wage discrimination is a principle based on the provisions of article 1 of the International Labour Organization Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) (ratified on 31 January 1961).

97. The wages paid to a worker are determined by a labour contract concluded in accordance with the systems used by a particular employer for the payment of wages. These systems include base pay, rates, supplements and bonuses of a compensatory nature, including for work in conditions deviating from the norm; they are established by means of collective agreements, contracts and local laws or regulations, in accordance with the labour law and other laws and regulations containing labour law standards.

98. Wage-payment systems should ensure that the wages paid to workers vary in line with the complexity and quality of the work done and with the effectiveness of their activities, as judged against specified criteria and indicators.

99. One of the main instruments for the legal regulation of labour relations and relations directly associated with them is the institution of social partnership.

100. Social partnership in negotiations between trade unions and employers is the main mechanism for resolving issues concerning wage increases in the real economy. The outcomes of these negotiations are drawn up in contracts or collective agreements and are binding on employers. Moreover, issues concerning wage increases in the real economy are explored with the aid of social partnership mechanisms at the federal, sectoral and regional levels.

**18.**

101. Reducing the share of the informal sector in the Russian Federation is extremely important both for the individual constituent entities and for the country as a whole.

102. See also annex 4.

103. In assessing the social and economic consequences of informal employment, we should first and foremost highlight the budgetary losses of social contributions and tax receipts at all levels, which leads to the underfunding of State activities in the social sphere.

104. Reducing informal employment and bringing employment relationships into the legal economy are among the national strategic priorities of the national security strategy, which was approved by Presidential Decree No. 683 of 31 December 2015.

105. As a result of a number of measures aimed at reducing informal employment in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, over 5 million workers in the constituent entities have been brought into the legal economy since 2015, including more than 2,293,000 workers in 2016 (13.4 per cent more than in 2015).

106. The implementation of these measures has resulted in the payment of additional insurance contributions of 27.3 million roubles (US$ 455,000) to the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation.

**19.**

107. The majority of the labour law violations uncovered by prosecutors in 2016 concerned the payment of wages: 708,000 violations.

108. According to data collected in a survey of employers, total wage arrears amounted to 2.725 billion roubles (US$ 45.4 million) on 1 January 2017. The arrears amounted to less than 1 per cent of total wages. The proportion of workers at large- and medium-sized enterprises who were owed wages was 0.15 per cent.

109. The recovery of wages owed by insolvent employers is subject to strict supervision.

110. Prosecutors constantly monitor compliance by court bailiffs with the law on enforcement proceedings of orders for the forced recovery of unpaid wages.

111. The records of procuratorial monitoring of the non-payment of wages often serve as the basis for the initiation of criminal cases by the investigating authorities, in application of article 145.1 of the Criminal Code. As a rule, the courts issue non-custodial sentences for failure to pay wages.

112. The late or incomplete payment of wages violates the right of workers to freely choose their work and forces them to remain at their jobs. Non-payment or delay in payment for annual leave violates their right to rest.

113. If a wage payment is overdue by more than 15 days, the worker has the right to suspend work for the entire pay period until the overdue sum is paid. Since 10 January 2016, workers have retained their right to average wages during the period in which work is suspended.

114. Federal Act No. 272 of 3 July 2016 amending a number of federal laws and increasing the liability of employers for violations of the law on the payment of wages increased the administrative liability of employers who fail to pay wages on time or set wages lower than those established by the labour law.

115. In particular, under this law, the non-payment of wages or of other emoluments was made a specific administrative offence, and the fines for such offences were increased.

116. In 2016, prosecutors recovered unpaid wages amounting to more than 28.5 billion roubles (US$ 475 millions in total.

**Trade union rights (art. 8)**

**20.**

117. In 2012, proceedings were concluded in 97 cases questioning the lawfulness of strikes and requesting compensation for the damage caused by them; 27 decisions were rendered, including 19 in which the claims were upheld.

- In 2013, proceedings were concluded in 328 such cases; 38 decisions were rendered, including 24 in which the claims were upheld
- In 2014, proceedings were concluded in 20 such cases; 10 decisions were rendered, including 10 in which the claims were upheld
- In 2015, proceedings were concluded in 20 such cases; 18 decisions were rendered, including 16 in which the claims were upheld
- In 2016, proceedings were concluded in 57 such cases; 47 decisions were rendered, including 34 in which the claims were upheld

| | Strikes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of employers where strikes took place | Number of workers who participated in strikes | | Time not worked by workers on strike (working days) | | Average number of days not worked per strike participant |
| | | Thousands of persons | Average per employer (persons) | Thousands | Average per employer | |
| 2013 | 3 | 0.2 | 65 | 0.2 | 78 | 1.2 |
| 2014 | 2 | 0.5 | 231 | 5.0 | 2 506 | 10.9 |
| 2015 | 5 | 0.8 | 167 | 10.2 | 2 034 | 12.2 |
| 2016 | 3 | 0.1 | 19 | 0.1 | 33 | 1.7 |

**Right to social security (art. 9)**

**21.**

118. Presidential Decree No. 531 of 25 July 2014 amended the State Programme to Assist the Voluntary Resettlement to the Russian Federation of Ethnic Russians Living Abroad, which had been approved by Presidential Decree No. 637 of 22 June 2006. It thus gave ethnic Russians — both foreign citizens and stateless persons granted temporary asylum in the Russian Federation — the right to submit applications for participation in the State programme with the local bodies of the Federal Migration Service (currently, the local bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation at the regional level) in the constituent entities implementing corresponding regional resettlement programmes.

119. These amendments were introduced in response to the arrival in the Russian Federation of ethnic Russians who had been forced to leave Ukraine.

120. Government Decision No. 1307 of 3 December 2014 amended a number of federal acts related to the implementation of the State programme. It set the amounts of payments to ethnic Russians who became participants in the State programme based on their being granted temporary asylum in the country and it specified the list of documents they had to submit with their applications.

121. To provide the maximum support for such persons, the Government on 8 October 2014 adopted Government Decision No. 1032, which established how to work with ethnic Russians having permanent residence in Ukraine who arrived in the Russian Federation, were granted temporary asylum and wanted to participate in the State programme.

122. This government decision approved temporary rules for assisting these ethnic Russians from Ukraine. The temporary rules reduced the number of documents required for such people to take part in the State programme. Moreover, it was recommended that the executive bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation consider applications received from this category of persons within a period of no more than 10 working days and, in the absence of documents on the applicants' education, vocational training or work experience, interview them in order to clarify their professional skills and qualifications.

123. Most of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation undertake additional activities in the framework of the regional resettlement programmes to help such participants and their family members in difficult circumstances find employment, temporary housing and financial assistance.

124. In 2014-2016, 436,050 persons were resettled in the Russian Federation within the framework of the State programme, including 213,447 citizens of Ukraine, representing 49 per cent of the total.

125. From 1 January 2012, foreign nationals and stateless persons with permanent or temporary status in the country, and also those temporarily in the country's territory, have been covered by the mandatory pension scheme (by virtue of amendments to Federal Act No. 167 of 15 December 2001, the Mandatory Pension Insurance Act, art. 7).

126. Since 1 January 2015, employers have paid insurance contributions for such persons from the first day of their employment and/or other activity.

127. The Russian Federation has for many years also been playing an active role in drafting and concluding bilateral treaties on cooperation in the area of social security and pension insurance with foreign States, including members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

**Protection of the family and children (art. 10)**

**22.**

128. Pursuant to article 19 of the Constitution, the State guarantees equal human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of, inter alia, a person's sex, race, ethnicity, language, origin, financial situation, official capacity, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs or membership of voluntary associations. Any form of restriction imposed on civil rights on social, racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious grounds is prohibited. Article 22 of the Constitution establishes the right of every person to freedom and personal inviolability. Unlawful or arbitrary deprivation of liberty is prohibited.

129. Citizens can be placed, without their consent or that of their legal representatives, in residential establishments providing social services, but only on the grounds of and in accordance with the procedure provided in the law (Act No. 3185-1 of 2 July 1992 on Psychiatric Care and Guarantees for the Rights of Citizens Receiving Such Care).

130. Persons suffering from psychiatric disorders can be hospitalized at medical institutions providing inpatient psychiatric care without their consent or that of their legal representatives for the following reasons: if their treatment is possible only on an inpatient basis and they present a danger to themselves or to those around them; or in the event of helplessness or an inability to meet their basic vital needs, when substantial harm may be caused to their health if their psychiatric state worsens and if they are left without psychiatric care.

131. Persons remain in such medical institutions against their will for as long as the grounds for their hospitalization remain valid. For a period of six months, a panel of psychiatrists conducts an examination no less than once a month to determine whether a hospitalized person should be discharged.

132. When the six months since the date of hospitalization have elapsed, the decision of the panel of psychiatrists regarding the extension of the period of hospitalization is referred to a court. The judge can extend the period of hospitalization on the basis of Federal Act on Psychiatric Care and Guarantees for the Rights of Citizens Receiving Such Care. Thereafter, judges take such decisions once a year.

**23.**

133. The legislation of the Russian Federation concerning the fundamental guarantees for children's rights in the Russian Federation is based on the Constitution (art. 38) and consists of Federal Act No. 124 of 24 July 1998 on Fundamental Guarantees for Children's Rights, the Family Code, Presidential Decree No. 986 of 1 September 2009 on the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, the corresponding federal laws and other laws and regulations of the Russian Federation, and laws and regulations of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

134. In addition, the Office of the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights protects children's rights and legal interests within its areas of competence.

135. In 2016, respect for the labour rights of adolescents was the focus of constant attention on the part of prosecutors. More than 14,000 violations of laws in the area of employment and labour protection for minors were uncovered.

136. (These included cases in which contracts were concluded with workers who were minors without conducting the mandatory medical examination, cases of failure to comply

with legal requirements and conditions for their employment and cases of the non-payment or late payment of wages.)

137. Federal Act No. 58 of 5 April 2013 amending a number of laws to prevent trafficking in and exploitation of children, child prostitution and activities associated with the production and distribution of child pornography modified several laws protecting the rights and interests of minors.

138. For example, the following definitions were added to Federal Act No. 124 of 24 July 1998 on Fundamental Guarantees for Children's Rights in the Russian Federation:

- "Trafficking in children": the purchase or sale of a minor or other transaction in relation to a minor or the recruitment, transportation, transfer or harbouring of a minor for the purposes of exploitation
- "Child exploitation": the use of minors for prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation, the use of minors for slave labour, servitude of minors, the illegal removal of organs and/or tissues from minors or the illegal adoption of a minor for material gain
- "Victim of trafficking in children and/or exploitation": a minor who has suffered from trafficking in children and/or exploitation, including one who has become involved in the trafficking of children and/or has been subjected to exploitation, irrespective of whether or not the minor has consented to perform acts related to trafficking in children and/or exploitation

139. Pursuant to article 14.2 (4) of Federal Act No. 124, citizens of the Russian Federation, foreign nationals and stateless persons bear criminal, civil and disciplinary liability for the commission of offences involving trafficking in children and/or child exploitation, as stipulated by law.

**24.**

140. Federal Act No. 323 of 3 July 2016 amended the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure to improve the basis and procedures for release from criminal responsibility. The acts addressed by article 116 (1) of the Criminal Code were thus decriminalized and transferred to the Code of Administrative Offences by Federal Act No. 326 of 3 July 2016, which amended certain laws subsequent to the adoption of Act No. 323.

141. Moreover, article 116 of the Criminal Code was supplemented with a note containing a definition of "close persons" according to which such persons include spouses, parents, children, adoptive parents, adopted children, siblings, grandfathers, grandmothers, grandchildren, guardians, trustees, and persons who are in a relationship with the accused or who live with him or her.

142. These amendments gave rise to an ambiguous situation. For battery against close persons, criminal liability arose at the first offence, whereas battery against other persons was considered an administrative offence.

143. At the same time, a further legal incongruity was identified: battery against close persons but not resulting in injury carried a maximum penalty of up to 2 years' deprivation of liberty, but the maximum penalty was up to 4 months' detention if it resulted in minor injury.

144. After proposals were received from a large number of citizens regarding the removal of these inconsistencies, and in the interests of further harmonizing criminal justice, it was decided that article 116 of the Criminal Code should be reworked.

145. On 7 February 2017, Federal Act No. 8 amending article 116 of the Criminal Code entered into force. It reclassifies as an administrative rather than a criminal offence battery and the commission of other violent acts that cause physical pain but do not result in the consequences set out in article 115 of the Criminal Code (Deliberate infliction of minor injury), if the battery is committed against close persons and as a first offence. Thus, liability for such offences arises in accordance with article 6.1.1 (Battery) of the Code of Administrative Offences.

146. Criminal prosecution for battery inflicted on close persons is now possible only for repeat offences. In such cases, article 116.1 of the Criminal Code (Battery committed by a person subject to an administrative penalty) applies. When criminal liability for a repeat administrative offence is invoked, the case is referred, inter alia, for the timely detection and resolution of cases of domestic violence or of unlawful behaviour by parents or other persons at risk of committing violent acts. The aim is to prevent the commission of more serious offences, including domestic homicides, that have been preceded by protracted conflicts in the family.

**Right to an adequate standard of living (art. 11)**

**25.**

147. In the Russian Federation, persons whose incomes are below the minimum subsistence level are classed as poor.

148. Owing to unfavourable financial and economic conditions, the number of persons classed as poor increased in 2014-2016: there were 15.5 million poor persons (10.8 per cent of the population) in 2013, 16.1 million (11.2 per cent) in 2014, 19.5 million (13.3 per cent) in 2015 and 19.8 million (13.5 per cent) in 2016.

149. In 2016, the lowest proportions of the population with incomes below the minimum substance level were recorded in the Republic of Tatarstan (7 per cent), Belgorod Province (8 per cent) and Saint Petersburg (8 per cent). The highest proportions were recorded in the Republic of Tyva (42.5 per cent) and the Republic of Kalmykia (31.2 per cent).

150. Annex 5 contains information on the poverty rate across the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in 2016, according to the methodology used by the Russian Federation and according to an international methodology (40 and 50 per cent of the median per capita income), as well as information on the distribution of poverty disaggregated by age, sex, level of economic activity and place of residence.

**26.**

151. One way of improving the housing situation of Roma is to offer them assistance in registering titles to housing units, a procedure to which Roma do not attach due importance.

152. A number of regions have successfully addressed situations where certain homes built without authorization by Roma were demolished in accordance with court orders. The federal authorities devote particular attention to such cases and local and regional authorities also conduct relevant activities (information on such cases has been circulated to other regions, as a model).

153. Some of the specific steps include granting land parcels to Roma, registering titles to the land beneath already legalized structures and installing water and electricity meters. To settle disputes, use is made of all judicial and quasi-judicial instruments, including the institutions of federal and regional human rights commissioners, public councils and advisory bodies.

**27.**

154. According to information submitted by the investigation department for the Chechen Republic, a unit of the Investigative Committee, the Investigative Committee received no reports of offences involving house-burnings by the authorities against persons who conducted extremist or terrorist activities or against their relatives.

**28.**

155. Annex 6 contains statistics on the consumer price index for housing for the period 2011-2016 and for goods and services for 2013-2016.

156. Under the current methodology, the consumer price index for goods and services is calculated in two groups:

- in accordance with the classification of individual consumption by purpose (COICOP)
- in accordance with the national methodology

157. The national methodology for calculating the consumer price index involves the formation of groups of food products, non-food products and services, along with groups at lower aggregation levels.

158. In 2017, the selection of representative goods and services on the basis of which price information is gathered for the monthly calculation of the consumer price index contains 506 representative goods and services, including 123 food products, 260 non-food products and 123 services.

159. The housing and communal services group includes the provision of services for:

- Maintenance and repair of State and municipal housing, total area ($m^2$)
- Leases on residential units in State and municipal housing, total area ($m^2$)
- Maintenance and repair of housing for homeowners who have acquired ownership of their housing units following privatization or on other grounds, total area ($m^2$)

**Right to physical and mental health (art. 12)**

**29.**

160. The Russian Federation currently has an effective three-tiered, three-stage system for the comprehensive prevention of the non-medical use of narcotics: (1) detoxification and treatment; (2) medical rehabilitation; and (3) social rehabilitation and resocialization.

161. Following the introduction of this system, in the last five years a positive trend has clearly emerged in all age groups across all indicators of poor health associated with drug abuse and narcotics use.

**30.**

162. The legislation on the prevention of the spread of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) consists of basic Federal Acts: Federal Act No. 323 of 21 November 2011 on Fundamentals of Health Care for Citizens of the Russian Federation and Federal Act No. 38 of 30 March 1995 on the Prevention of the Spread of Diseases Caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV); it also includes other federal laws and the laws and regulations adopted in accordance with them, as well as the laws and regulations of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

163. The State strategy for the prevention of the spread of HIV in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020 and beyond (approved by Government Order No. 2203 of 20 October 2016) was crafted to build on Presidential Decree No. 761 of 1 June 2012 on the National Children's Strategy for 2012-2017, so as to develop comprehensive approaches for the prevention of the spread of HIV in the country.

164. Government Order No. 754 of 20 April 2017 approved an action plan for the implementation of the State strategy.

165. The main focuses of the strategy are:

- Increasing the scope of HIV testing among the population
- Increasing the number of persons infected with HIV who receive antiretroviral therapy
- Reducing the risk of mother-to-child HIV transmission to a minimum
- Raising public awareness of how to prevent HIV infection and of the diseases associated with HIV
- Promoting a healthy, socially responsible lifestyle and emphasizing the unacceptability of discrimination against persons infected with HIV in the family,

public life, employment (in selecting an employment sector or occupation and in finding work) and health care

- Improving the system for the epidemiological monitoring and surveillance of the spread of HIV in the country

166. Since 1 January 2007, a federal register of persons infected with HIV has been maintained (the rules for keeping the register were approved by Government Decision No. 426 of 8 April 2017). Its purpose is to assist in the provision of medical assistance, including drugs for medical purposes, for the treatment of diseases caused by HIV.

167. An HIV/AIDS coordinating council has been set up under the Ministry of Health.

168. The priority given to preventing the spread of HIV and the implementation of a range of measures have led to an increase in the detection rate in recent years, which reflects the growing number of persons who voluntarily undergo HIV testing. Every year, more than 30 million persons from all the major risk groups undergo such testing.

169. The prevalence of HIV differs significantly from region to region within the country. More than 50 per cent of all new cases of HIV infection are registered in 22 constituent entities of the Russian Federation. In these regions, the HIV prevalence rate is up to twice the average for the country as a whole.

170. The implementation of a range of preventive measures has allowed the Russian Federation to become a world leader in the prevention of the vertical transmission of HIV over the last 10 years. The risk of vertical, mother-to-child HIV transmission is now less than 2 per cent.

171. A wide range of preventive and anti-epidemic measures have led to a marked deceleration in the spread of acute hepatitis B and C.

172. The prevalence rate of acute hepatitis C was 17.5 times lower in 2016, at 1.23 per 100,000 persons, than it had been in 2000.

173. The social and economic impact of viral hepatitis continues to be mainly attributable to the high prevalence of chronic forms, but the rate is on a downward trend and has declined by 5.2 per cent over the last two years alone.

174. Chronic hepatitis C remains the predominant form of viral hepatitis, and the prevalence rate in 2016 was 36.1 per 100,000 persons.

**31.**

175. Federal Act No. 323 of 21 November 2011 on Fundamentals of Health Care for Citizens of the Russian Federation establishes the legal basis for medical activities relating to family planning and the human reproductive system.

176. According to the reporting system covering this sector, in 2015, 24.1 per cent of women of childbearing age used modern methods of contraception (hormonal contraceptives or intrauterine devices).

177. Measures to prevent abortion and protect reproductive health are carried out at women's clinics, obstetrical and gynaecological units, family planning and reproduction centres, family health-care and reproduction centres, medico-social assistance units and medico-social support centres for pregnant women in difficult circumstances.

178. Currently, 1,075 women's health centres have medico-social assistance units, and 385 medico-social assistance centres for pregnant women in difficult circumstances are operational.

179. A steady fall in the number of abortions has been recorded in recent years.

180. Between 2012 and 2016, the abortion rate fell by 24.8 per cent, from 25.8 to 19.4 per 1,000 women of childbearing age.

181. In order to ensure the accessibility, quality and safety of abortions and to avoid and prevent related problems, medical assistance in the interruption of pregnancy is included

under the programme of State guarantees for the provision of cost-free medical assistance and is free of charge; the expenses are paid from the compulsory medical insurance fund.

**Right to education (arts. 13-14)**

**32.**

182. As of 1 January 2017, there were around 12.31 million persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation, or about 8.4 per cent of the population, and 5.1 per cent of them were aged under 18 years (630,000 persons: 347,000 boys and 271,000 girls).

183. The numbers of children and adolescents aged 7 to 18 years not studying in educational institutions in the Russian Federation were as follows:

| | *As of 1 October (persons)* | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *2012* | *2013* | *2014* | *2015* | *2016* |
| Number of children and adolescents who are not studying in educational institutions (total) | 30 387 | 26 291 | 24 139 | 23 287 | 18 520 |
| including girls | 11 437 | 10 062 | 9 151 | 8 948 | 7 050 |
| including persons with disabilities | 14 110 | 13 860 | 13 528 | 11 742 | 9 232 |

**33.**

184. Over the period 2012-2016, considerable work was done to improve the legal framework for education in the country:

- Standards were set to regulate the activities of educational institutions in inclusive, correctional, home schooling, remote and post-graduate education, thus providing the possibility of continuous education for persons with disabilities throughout their lives.
- A separate article (art. 79) was included in Federal Act No. 273 of 29 December 2012, the Education Act, addressing education for persons with special needs. It sets out the specific terms for the provision of education for persons with disabilities (for example, the use of special education programmes and methods of instruction and training, and of special textbooks and teaching materials; the provision of assistants or attendants; and provisions about accessibility of buildings at educational institutions).
- In 2013-2014, in accordance with the new law on education, the Ministry of Education and Science drafted and approved orders on how to organize educational activities for students with special needs; the orders also set out the obligations of educational organizations in terms of creating special conditions for their instruction. They take into consideration the various needs of students with severe structural and functional impairments, in particular physical, visual and hearing impairments.

185. For example, Ministry of Education and Science on 30 August 2013 issued Order No. 1015, which approved a procedure for organizing and conducting educational activities as part of the main general education programmes (those at the primary, basic and secondary levels). It provides, inter alia, for:

- Official websites of educational institutions to be adapted to the specific visual needs of persons with disabilities and brought into line with international standards for the accessibility of online content and services (the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, WCAG)
- Information on the schedule of classes and educational activities to be written in an easily legible font, with large lettering (capital letters at least 7.5 cm high) and high-contrast backgrounds (on a white or yellow background), and in Braille, in areas accessible to all students who are blind or have visual impairments and in an appropriate form (in line with their particular needs)

- Assistants to be present to provide essential help to students
- Alternative formats of printed materials (large print) and audio files to be produced
- An accessible building at the educational institution to be made available to blind students who use guide dogs, where they can leave their guide dogs while they are being taught, etc.

186. Annex 7 contains data on the number of persons with disabilities in educational institutions.

**34.**

187. Roma children have equal rights and opportunities to attend educational institutions, where they receive textbooks, stationery and meals. Schoolchildren are bussed to general educational institutions in rural areas.

188. There have been no established cases of the segregation of Roma children. In some rural schools, so-called "Roma classes" have been set up at the initiative of parents and in consideration of the traditions and nomadic way of life of citizens of Roma ethnicity. For the same reasons, distance and on-site/off-site courses have been organized for such children at some schools.

189. In Tambov Province, in the village of Kalinin, in the Kuzmino-Gat rural council area of Tambov district, on-site/off-site classes have been held for students of grades 5 to 9 at Secondary School No. 1, in consideration of their ethnic traditions and the wishes of their parents. Instruction of this kind is provided to 58 Roma children by eight teachers, who work with the pupils three afternoons a week. In addition, two children are home-schooled, for medical reasons.

190. In Leningrad Province, there were 24 first-grade children of Roma ethnicity in 2014 and 23 in 2015; a Special Child project was drawn up to provide affordable, high-quality and effective education for all children, regardless of the financial situation of their parents, their level of development and their ethnicity.

191. In the Mari El Republic, 34 Roma children attend school. There are no special or separate classes for Roma children, and they are admitted to educational institutions and taught in accordance with the rules that apply to all students.

192. If it is ascertained that a school-age child is not attending secondary school on account of an unwillingness to receive instruction, the directors of educational institutions, local authority representatives and juvenile affairs inspectors conduct awareness-raising activities with the parents, and the juvenile affairs and children's rights commissions take the appropriate steps.

193. For children who experience difficulties in the general educational programme, general education institutions arrange for psychologists to oversee the teaching process. Psychological training is given to support self-development and self-awareness, with a view to helping the children adapt to the conditions of schooling and education.

**Cultural rights (art. 15)**

**35.**

194. Under the State programme entitled "Information Society (2011-2020)", State support is awarded every year to organizations that publish, distribute or reproduce works with a positive social impact in the print media, including media outlets that publish in the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation.

195. In 2016, applications from 56 print publications in the ethnic languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation were approved, for a total of around 22 million roubles (US$ 366,000).

196. A federal special-purpose programme for 2014-2020 is aimed at strengthening the unity of the Russian nation and the ethnocultural development of the peoples of the Russian Federation. It provides support for programmes carried out by the regions and the

constituent entities of the Russian Federation with a view to strengthening the unity of the Russian nation, harmonizing international relations and promoting the ethnocultural diversity of the peoples of the country.

197. Under this programme, federal budget subsidies were provided to the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation in 2016 to co-finance the production and publication of newspapers and magazines, including in ethnic languages (as in Tyumen Province), and to support print media in the languages of the peoples of the Republic of Crimea.

198. The translation into Russian of works of fiction and of educational, pedagogical and scientific literature written in languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation is supported at both the federal and regional level.

199. Moreover, under the federal special-purpose programme entitled "Russian Culture (2012-2018)", subsidies are given to publishing houses in the republics and national autonomous areas to support the publication of works of fiction and educational and scientific literature in the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation.

200. In the 2016/17 academic year, 556 general education institutions of all forms of ownership are functioning in the Republic of Crimea; they teach 192,300 children. The language of instruction is Russian for 186,500 of these children (96.9 per cent of the total), Crimean Tatar for 5,400 (3 per cent) and Ukrainian for 371 (0.1 per cent).

201. In the current academic year, there are 15 general education institutions in the Republic of Crimea that use Crimean Tatar as the language of instruction (201 classes, with 3,651 students).

202. See also annex 8.

**36.**

203. An extensive (using around 200,000 km of fibre-optic cables) project of unprecedented complexity and involving enormous investment is currently being implemented. Its aim is to develop infrastructure to deliver modern communications services to all citizens.

204. The social focus of the project is an important feature. It is now mainly aimed at providing services to inhabitants of small communities with a population of between 250 and 500 persons. The Government has approved rates for them that are highly competitive by international standards. They receive broadband Internet access at a speed of 10 Mbps, with no limits on the quantity of data received or sent, for 45 roubles a month (around US$ 0.7 or €0.6 at current exchange rates).

205. Experts estimate that the Internet penetration rate among older persons in the winter of 2015-2016 was 69 per cent, or 80.5 million persons (Public Opinion Foundation survey conducted on 22 April 2016).

206. See also annex 9.

207. By the end of 2016, around 34,400 km of the fibre-optic cables required to deliver communication services to the entire territory of the Russian Federation had been installed. Broadband Internet services have thus been provided via access points to 3,909 communities with a population of between 250 and 500 persons in 71 constituent entities of the Russian Federation (the total number of communities for which there are plans to set up access points and install fibre-optic cables to connect them is 14,000).

208. In addition, in order to connect remote areas to the country's telecommunication networks, the Ministry of Communications and the Mass Media has launched and is overseeing projects to install submarine fibre-optic cables for remote territories on the mainland along the Magadan-Sakhalin-Kamchatka route. The next stage, planned for 2018, is to achieve a connection with the telecommunication networks of the Kuril Islands. The total length of the two submarine fibre-optic cables is 2,740 km, with an aggregate throughput of 440 Gbps.